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tion of public ownership immediately complete or compulsory or the control a monopoly. He would have Parliament empower local authorities to make a large range of experiments and extend their operations according to practical results. As to compensation, Mr. Pease seems to think ten years' purchase of the annual value of the license would constitute a fair remuneration for those displaced at once. The complicated problems of administration and the dangers of corruption, he regards as no greater than those at present connected with municipal undertakings.

CHARLES A. BEARD.

*The Negro Artisan: A Social Study*, made under the direction of Atlanta University by the Seventh Atlanta Conference, and edited by W. E. BURGHARDT DU BOIS. The Atlanta University Press, 1902. — viii, 192 pp.

Of the total number of negroes in this country nearly 90 per cent are engaged either in agriculture or domestic service. Roughly speaking, about five per cent are skilled workmen, as against nearly 20 per cent for whites. Inasmuch as the vast majority of negroes live in the South and the South is developing many industrial interests besides agriculture, it becomes especially important to know what is happening relative to the artisan class of negroes.

This pamphlet is packed with information on that topic, much of it possessing deep interest for the general public, though perhaps most of it is too detailed and complicated to be useful to any save close students. The arrangement, however, is such that the general reader can readily get what is desired without troubling himself about more intricate portions. The study is divided into 64 sections, and at the outset notice is given to the reader pointing out what sections are of general interest.

Statistics are a prominent feature, numerous tables being presented which have reference to industrial training for negroes, their occupations, the distribution of the negro artisan throughout the United States, the gain or loss in numbers in various localities, *etc.* Perhaps more interesting, if not equally valuable, are the historical portions in which the career of the negro artisan class is sketched and also the development of his industrial education. The latter topic is quite fully treated: the curricula of industrial schools, for example, their number and cost, their strength and weakness, and their practical results are set forth. The relations of the negro artisan with trades unions are ex-

amined, and some significant information is furnished. Similarly as regards his relations with the employing class. In a word, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find elsewhere within equally small space more useful and important knowledge relating to this race in America.

The reliability of no small part of the data collected is seriously to be questioned, *viz.* such data as were secured by sending out to hundreds of individual negroes a schedule of questions. In the first place, how far can we trust the accuracy and fidelity to truth of the answers, when the plain intent of these is to reveal whether the individual concerned has led a creditable life or not? Manifestly there would be an almost irresistible impulse to state only what was creditable and to omit equally important facts that did not appear well. In every case possible, it is true, efforts were made with fair success to verify the answers made by reference to other witnesses, such as fellow-workmen, employers and others in the community. Nevertheless a wide margin of error must inevitably be suspected in the results of such a method. In the second place, it is a very grave defect of this method that precisely those who cannot make a good showing will not be heard from, since they will not choose to report themselves. Thus it happens that, in working out the results, it is actually a sifted class that is dealt with, and not the indiscriminate mass.

Every one deeply interested in our negro population hopes to receive favorable light from each new work bearing upon them. A careful consideration of this study and of its cautious and very fairly stated conclusions leaves one with the feeling that after all we are by no means assured of the negro artisan's industrial safety and upward progress. For instance, we are told in the principal paragraph of the summary that

There are a large number of negro mechanics all over the land, but especially in the South; some of these are progressive, efficient workmen. More are careless, slovenly, and ill-trained. There are signs of lethargy among these artisans and work is slipping from them in some places; in others they are awakening and seizing the opportunities of the new industrial South.

We are told further in the summary that the slave-artisan was "for the most part careless and inefficient," a first-class mechanic being the exception; that industrial training is badly needed, and is costly; that the prejudice of trades unions keeps the mass of negroes out of many trades; that "employers on the whole are satisfied with negro skilled

labor," while there is a divided opinion as to the practical value of industrial education; and that the negro "evinces considerable mechanical ingenuity." Both dark and bright are so commingled here that one can scarcely decide which preponderates.

Meanwhile, there is one extremely important factor in the situation, which this study, admirable as it is, quite ignores. Nowhere does one find the faintest suggestion that among the various hindrances to his upward progress against which the negro must struggle may be one, which is all-pervading and fundamental, *viz.* an inherited nature not equal to the task set for it under the conditions presented by the United States to-day. The only difficulties of which we hear are lack of training, hostile race-prejudice, the sudden and rapid industrial changes in the South, and other environmental circumstances. We are familiar enough with the fact that the situations in which individuals find themselves placed from the moment of birth vary widely, and that in the struggle for life many seem to be overborne by adverse circumstances alone — an explanation they themselves and their friends usually offer. Yet stronger natures overcome adverse circumstances and succeed. We are not familiar with the idea of applying this principle to the case of the negro, and asking whether he has to overcome adverse circumstances alone, or, in addition to these, certain inherited characteristics, not advantageous for him under present conditions. Yet this is the vital question, so long as the race is not isolated, but must measure its strength against that of white competition.

Of course environmental forces play a part, indeed a peculiarly important part, in making the negro what he is; and it is unquestionable that many of these forces are sadly against him, yet need not and ought not to be so. To ascertain exactly what they are and to strive for their diminution is certainly our duty. But if we study and plan without recognizing the force of racial heredity, on the off-hand assumption that the negro and the Caucasian are in this respect on an equal vantage ground, then we need not be surprised if time reveals misdirected effort and ill-founded hopes. To secure a really useful knowledge of the negro hereditary endowment and of its divergences from that of the Caucasian is a profoundly difficult undertaking, but surely not a hopeless one. Some beginnings in this direction have already been made, and it is to be hoped that future studies of the negro in this country will devote increasing attention to it.

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